

**INITIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT FAX SHEET OF RECEIPT OF DEFECT
INFORMATION REPORT SUBMITTED UNDER 49 CFR PART 573**

Assigned Recall No. 99V-033.003 by the
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

APR 15 1999

Part 573 Report Date: April 6, 1999

MANUFACTURER: Freightliner Corporation

MANUFACTURER CONTACT: Mr. Gary W. Rossow

FAX: (503) 735-6800

SUBJECT: 512 Freightliner 1996-1998 Custom Chassis Corporation Model MT35 and MT45 step vans manufactured from May 2, 1996 through November 11, 1998. The tie rod end can pull outboard and separate from the tie rod tube due to improper thread engagement between the male tie rod end and the female tube. Separation of the tie rod end could result in loss of steering control, increasing the risk of a vehicle crash. *Freightliner Campaign No. FL-233.*

This is an initial acknowledgment for this recall. A formal acknowledgment letter will be forthcoming shortly. After our review of your report and associated documents, we may have additional comments or concerns.

As stated in Part 573.6, submission of the first of six consecutive quarterly status reports is required within one month after the close of the calendar quarter in which notification to purchasers occurs. As stated in your report, owner notification is expected to begin May 19, 1999. Therefore, the first quarterly report will be due by July 30, 1999.

If you have any questions, please call:



Patricia Wallace, Recall Analyst on (202) 366-5232 or
Jonathan White, Chief on (202) 366-5227
Recall Analysis Division



U.S. Department
of Transportation
National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

APR 22 1999

Mr. Gary W. Rossow
Director, Government Technical Affairs
Freightliner Corporation
4747 N. Channel Ave.
Portland, OR 97217

NSA-11paw
99V-033.003

Dear Mr. Rossow:

We have reviewed Freightliner Corporation's (Freightliner) Defect Information Report dated April 6, 1999, submitted in accordance with 49 CFR Part 573, "Defect and Noncompliance Reports." This recall involves 512 Freightliner 1996 through 1998 Custom Chassis Corporation Model MT35 and MT45 step vans manufactured from May 2, 1996 through November 11, 1998. The tie rod end can pull outboard and separate from the tie rod tube due to improper thread engagement between the male tie rod end and the female tube. Separation of the tie rod end could result in loss of steering control, increasing the risk of a vehicle crash. **The assigned identification number for this recall is 99V-033.003 (Freightliner Recall No. FL-233).**

Freightliner is responsible for the remedy of these vehicles from this date forward, regardless of vehicle age, mileage, or ownership.

Quarterly Status Reports

As stated in Part 573.6, submission of the first of six consecutive quarterly status reports is required within one month after the close of the calendar quarter in which notification to purchasers occurs. As stated in your report, owner notification is expected to begin May 19, 1999. Therefore, the first quarterly report will be due by July 30, 1999.

Recall Communications

Communications pertaining to safety recalls and issued by Freightliner to more than one distributor, dealer, purchaser, or owner are to be submitted to this office within 5 days of issuance as described under 49 CFR Part 573.5(c)(9). Where this information is sent over a period time, the communications are to be submitted within 5 days from the date the communications were first sent, and furnish the date, or range of dates, each communication was issued. This includes information transmitted by computer, telefax, or other electronic means; and initial or interim communications. All copies are to be in readable form and a written transcript should be provided for each non-written communication. Also, if the communication was not nationally and uniformly distributed, then identify the criteria used for the distribution.

Manufacturer Communications

Part 573.8, "Notices, Bulletins and Other Communications," requires that every motor vehicle or motor vehicle equipment manufacturer shall furnish a copy of **all notices, bulletins, and other communications (including warranty and policy extension communiques and product improvement bulletins)** to manufacturers, distributors, dealers, or purchasers, regarding any defect in its vehicle or items of equipment (including any failure or malfunction beyond normal deterioration in use, any failure of performance, or any flaw or unintended deviation from design specifications), **whether or not such defect is safety related**. These notices or communications are to be submitted, regardless of the media used to transmit the information. Where communications are made orally or electronically, provide a transcript. In all other cases, provide the information in the media form used to transmit the information. On a case by case basis, we may require written transcripts of this material as well. Copies are to be submitted monthly, not more than 5 working days after the end of each month.

If you have any questions, please contact Mrs. Pat Wallace at (202) 366-5232 or fax at (202) 366-7882.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jonathan D. White, Chief
Recall Analysis Division
Office of Defects Investigation
Safety Assurance